

THE STORY OF "THE NATIONAL"

Although wine and beer-making has been a handicraft that has been practised for centuries, it is only in the last twenty five years that the practitioners have become organised. On the 18th May, 1959, the first "National" was held in Andover, Hants. The event was called the National Congress of Amateur Winemakers. 170 winemakers from various parts of the country attended for the one-day show. Despite its success there did not at the time appear to be any great enthusiasm to take the matter any further.

Due greatly to the persistence of the Bournemouth Winemaking Circle, a further Conference and Show was held in Bournemouth in the April of 1960. Three hundred winemakers attended and entered 600 bottles of wine in the 21 classes. Shortly following the conference a committee was formed under the chairmanship of Mr. Cyril Berry, with Mr. Cyril C. Lucas as treasurer, under the title "National Association of Amateur Winemakers". From this modest beginning the movement flourished with astonishing rapidity, due to the hard work of the early committee members.

With the ever-increasing popularity of beer-making, the title of the National was eventually changed to include beer-makers.

The committee endeavours to hold the National Conference and Show at venues in different parts of the country so that each year at least some of the members do not have too far to travel. Alas, success has its attendant problems and of latter years the attendance has been so great that it is only with great difficulty that venues could be found that had the space to house over 4,000 bottles, with a lecture room and space for a dance for over 1,000 persons, with tables and chairs.

The National has always been the country's largest wine and beer show and it is mainly due to their forward thinking that their shows have been the format from which the Federations and Circles have taken their guide. It says much for their democracy of the National that an open section has always maintained in the show classes, thus allowing wine and beer-makers to enter even if they were not members of the N.A.W.B. It was hoped by the committee that, by this example, most winemakers would eventually join as members and thus support the movement by their subscriptions. Unfortunately this has not proved to be the case and many wine and beer-makers still avail themselves of the National Show but do not feel moved to join the movement. Happily, the committee is still optimistic that this attitude will change in the future. Members do have the advantage in that the majority of classes are for Members Only.

The National committee is ever alert to the problems of legislation that could be enacted to the detriment of wine and beer makers by the Government. Moreso now that we are members of the E.E.C. The National remains the main organisation of wine and beer-makers to combat any legislation that may be made to the amateur's disadvantage. It is now "The National Association of Wine and Beer-makers (Amateur)."

The National is one of the few national organisations which does not have any paid staff. The committee give all their services free and it speaks highly of their enthusiasm that they are prepared to give such hard work for the pleasure of helping fellow wine and beer makers.

All members are kept informed of their committee's plans and progress by means of a quarterly News Letter,

as well as advising the latest moves and developments in wine and beer-making.

Are YOU a member of the N.A.W.B.? If not, why not join without delay and become a member of the country's leading organisation of wine and beer makers? Help to support the organisation that supports you. Annual membership commences on the 1st July each year. All enquiries to the Hon. secretaries: Mr. D. Ives, 33 Heworth Road, York YO3 0AA or Mr. K. R. T. Bilham, "Hautescave", 4c Summerhill Villas, Susan Wood, Chislehurst, Kent.
